

ATF

Org Los Angeles World
Affairs Council

EXCERPTS FROM REMARKS

BY

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DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

BEFORE

LOS ANGELES WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 30, 1976

Summary of questions
in course of p. 9

W. Sturges

AT THE RISK OF DISAPPOINTING THOSE OF YOU IN THIS DISTINGUISHED AUDIENCE WHO HARBOR CLASSIC NOTIONS OF A ROMANTIC AND SECRETIVE SPY, I WILL START BY DIVULGING TO YOU MY MISSION. I DO NOT PROPOSE MERELY TO INFORM YOU, ALTHOUGH I HOPE TO DO THAT, TO THE EXTENT OF MY ABILITY. I HOPE TO PERSUADE YOU: PERSUADE YOU NOT TO ANY POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW OR TO ANY DIRECTION OF POLICY -- THAT I CANNOT AND WILL NOT DO, AS THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, AND THAT ASPECT OF MY PROFESSION I TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY INDEED -- BUT PERSUADE YOU TO RESOLVE TO BRING PUBLIC AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING TO REPLACE SENSATIONALISM, EXAGGERATION AND REHASHING OF THE PAST IN THE DISCUSSION OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

IN OUR TIME IT IS CLICHÉ TO SPEAK OF THE COMMUNICATIONS EXPLOSION AND OF THE VAST INFORMATION FLOW AROUND THE GLOBE. WE ALSO HAVE COME TO REALIZE HOW INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT IT IS TO COLLECT, ANALYZE, SELECT AND DISTILL INFORMATION INTO KNOWLEDGE, AND HOW IMPORTANT THAT KNOWLEDGE IS TO THE RATIONAL PROCESS OF DECISION-MAKING. TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, WHETHER IN PERSONAL LIFE, OR IN BUSINESS, OR IN THE ARENA OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, THE SIDE WITH THE SUPERIOR INTELLIGENCE, THE SUPERIOR KNOWLEDGE, THE MORE ACCURATE ANALYSIS AND CONSEQUENTLY THE SOUNDER DECISION, HAS THE EDGE.

MORE SPECIFICALLY, OUR DEFENSE STRATEGY IS FUNDAMENTALLY DEPENDENT ON THE AVAILABILITY OF POLITICAL WARNING -- AND THAT MEANS ON EXCELLENT INTELLIGENCE.

YET IN THE LAST TWO YEARS OR SO WE HAVE WITNESSED AN ASTOUNDING AMOUNT OF SENSATION-ORIENTED PUBLICITY GIVEN TO A LIMITED AMOUNT OF INFORMATION, WHICH HAS HAD THE FOLLOWING EFFECTS: IT HAS CAUSED OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES TO CALL INTO SERIOUS QUESTION THE ABILITY OF AMERICA TO KEEP IMPORTANT SECRETS, OURS OR THEIRS; IT HAS CREATED SERIOUS CONCERN AMONG NATIONS WHICH RELY ON OUR SUPPORT AND WHICH ARE LED INTO DOUBT AS TO OUR ABILITY TO GIVE IT; AND, FINALLY, IT HAS PROVIDED OUR DECLARED AND DETERMINED ADVERSARIES WITH INFORMATION WHICH OTHERWISE THEY WOULD HAVE HAD TO EXPEND A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF EFFORT TO OBTAIN, IF, INDEED, THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN IT AT ALL.

AT THE VERY LEAST, THIS KIND OF PUBLICITY PROVIDED GRIST FOR THE PROPAGANDA MILLS OF OUR ADVERSARIES:

SOVIET WIRE SERVICES HUMMED WITH THE STORIES OF CIA HAVING CAUSED THE SO-CALLED AMERICAN LEGION DISEASE, A JUICY TIDBIT WHICH THEY COULD PROUDLY CLAIM TO BE CITING FROM AMERICAN PRESS SOURCES.

CASTRO ACCUSED THE CIA OF BOMBING A CUBAN AIRLINER. THE CIA WAS NOT INVOLVED, BUT WHEN AN OUTRAGED SECRETARY OF STATE ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CATEGORICALLY AND COMPLETELY DENIED THIS BASELESS CHARGE, CASTRO'S ALLEGATIONS CONTINUED TO REVERBERATE, AFTER KISSINGER'S STATEMENT, ON SOME EDITORIAL PAGES *4/10/67*

OF THE NATION'S NEWSPAPERS.

A RATHER SHOPWORN ACCUSATION IN A SOVIET OFFICIAL PUBLICATION LAST MAY THAT THREE AMERICAN NEWSMEN WERE SPIES WAS RECEIVED BY MANY IN THIS COUNTRY WITH A MEASURE OF CREDENCE AND PROMPTLY CIA WAS ACCUSED OF HANGING A DARK CLOUD OF SUSPICION OVER THE ENTIRE PROFESSION OF JOURNALISM.

HERE IS A COPY OF A SOVIET BOOK FULL OF DISTORTIONS AND LIES THAT IS WRITTEN BASED LARGELY ON THE SENATE COMMITTEE HEARINGS THAT ENDED EARLY THIS YEAR.

I RECOGNIZE THAT THE CONCEPT OF SECRECY IS ONE THAT PRESENTS VERY SPECIAL AND QUITE REAL PROBLEMS OF UNDERSTANDING IN A DEMOCRATIC, OPEN SOCIETY. MANY IN OUR COUNTRY STILL IMPERFECTLY UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANT ROLE THAT SECRECY MUST PLAY IN ANY PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE.

SOMETIMES THE CONFUSION IS PROCEDURAL. SO, FOR INSTANCE, I FIND A GREAT DEAL OF MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT OUR REFUSAL TO DISCUSS SOURCES AND METHODS OF INTELLIGENCE. MANY PEOPLE, INCLUDING WELL-INFORMED JOURNALISTS, HAVE THE LINGERING IMPRESSION OR AT LEAST SUSPICION THAT SOMEHOW THIS REFUSAL IS IN VAGUE RELIANCE ON A SPURIOUSLY INVOKED CONCEPT OF "NATIONAL SECURITY". THESE PEOPLE DO NOT REALIZE THAT SUCH REFUSAL IS PROPERLY BASED ON THE LAW OF THE LAND. IT IS SPECIFICALLY BY LAW, BY THE NATIONAL SECURITY ACT OF 1947, THAT THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE IS CHARGED

WITH THE PROTECTION OF THE SOURCES AND METHODS OF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

SUBSTANTIVELY, THE RATIONALE FOR THE PROTECTION OF SOURCES AND METHODS IS A SOUND ONE. IN MANY INSTANCES, OUR ABILITY TO MONITOR VITAL INFORMATION WOULD BE JEOPARDIZED AND PERHAPS DESTROYED IF THE OTHER SIDE WERE AWARE OF THE METHODS WHICH WE EMPLOY TO COLLECT THAT INFORMATION.

FINALLY, THE CONCEPT OF SECRECY ITSELF IS FREQUENTLY PRESENTED AND PERCEIVED AS ONE THAT IS ALIEN TO OUR FREE SOCIETY. THAT IS NOT SO. SECRECY IS PRESENT IN OUR SYSTEM. INDEED, I WOULD SUGGEST IT IS NECESSARY, AND FREQUENTLY FUNDAMENTAL.

THERE ARE MANY SECRETS THAT WE ACCEPT AND PROTECT AS ESSENTIAL TO THE CONDUCT OF OUR SOCIETY. THE SECRET OF THE BALLOT BOX, THE SECRET OF GRAND JURY PROCEEDINGS, THE SECRET OF COURT DELIBERATIONS, THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE RELATIONSHIPS OF ATTORNEY AND CLIENT, DOCTOR AND PATIENT, PRIEST AND CONFESSIONAL.

BESIDES, WE KNOW THAT INDIVIDUAL PRIVACY, FOR INSTANCE, IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR CONCEPT OF FREEDOM. ONE MIGHT MAKE THE POINT THAT OUR COUNTRY IN ITS INTERNATIONAL DEALINGS IS ENTITLED TO SOME PRIVACY, AND IN FACT, THE CONCEPT OF DIPLOMATIC CONFIDENTIALITY IS ONE THAT IS WIDELY OBSERVED AND UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED.

OCCASIONALLY, DIPLOMATIC CONFIDENTIALITY MERGES WITH THE NEEDS OF INTELLIGENCE SECRECY. IT IS INTERESTING TO

5

OBSERVE IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THE CONSEQUENCES OF OFFICIAL ADMISSION OR DENIAL OF AN INTELLIGENCE OPERATION ARE NOT AUTOMATIC OR AUTOMATICALLY PREDICTABLE. FOR INSTANCE, TRADITIONALLY SPIES CAUGHT BY THE OTHER SIDE WERE DISOWNED. YET RECENTLY WE HAVE HAD VARIOUS APPROACHES TO THIS QUESTION.

IN 1960 PRESIDENT EISENHOWER ASSUMED PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE U-2 MISSION. THE RESULT, IN THAT CASE, WAS DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH MR. KHRUSHCHEV. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE HAD CASES WHERE NEWS ACCOUNTS OF INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS BASED ON LEAKS WERE PUBLISHED AND THE GOVERNMENT DECLINED ANY OFFICIAL COMMENT, IN WHICH CASES INTERNATIONAL CONFRONTATION WAS AVOIDED.

THERE IS ANOTHER CONSEQUENCE, A PARTICULARLY PAINFUL ONE, OF DISCLOSURE, THAT IS SOMETIMES OVERLOOKED, FREQUENTLY IGNORED. THE NAME, FOR INSTANCE, OF RICHARD WELCH, THE DISTINGUISHED AND RESPECTED SENIOR CIA OFFICER IN ATHENS, WAS PUBLISHED IN AN AMERICAN PUBLICATION. NOW, I CANNOT TELL YOU WHETHER THIS WAS A NEW AND DRAMATIC DISCLOSURE FOR THE KGB, FOR INSTANCE, BUT WHAT IT DID DO IS FINGER RICHARD WELCH FOR WHOEVER IT WAS THAT BROUGHT ABOUT HIS ASSASSINATION. HIS DEATH SURELY BROUGHT NO ADVANTAGE AND ENHANCEMENT OF CREDIBILITY TO THOSE DETERMINED TO PURSUE DISCLOSURE FOR THE SAKE OF DISCLOSURE.

IT IS NOT SECRECY THAT WE SHOULD DENY OURSELVES, KEEPING IN MIND ALWAYS THAT IT IS DESIGNED TO PROTECT OUR LEGITIMATE AND VITAL SECRETS NOT FROM OURSELVES BUT FROM OUR ADVERSARIES.

AND IT IS BECAUSE WE HAVE AN OPEN SOCIETY AND BECAUSE OUR ADVERSARIES CAN REACH INTO OUR SOCIETY, INTO OUR INSTITUTIONS OF FREE PRESS AND OPEN GOVERNMENT THAT WE MUST HAVE THE CRITERIA OF "NEED TO KNOW", THAT WE MUST HAVE RATIONAL AND RESPONSIBLE STANDARDS FOR SECURITY CLASSIFICATION, THAT WE MUST HAVE EFFECTIVE INDIVIDUAL PROTECTION OF GOVERNMENT SECRETS, AND THAT, I BELIEVE, WE SHOULD ALSO HAVE ADEQUATE LAWS PROVIDING ENFORCEABLE SANCTIONS FOR IMPROPER BREACH OF LEGITIMATE CONFIDENTIALITY. THESE LAWS AT THIS TIME WE DO NOT HAVE.

WHAT MAKES SECRECY IN AN OPEN SOCIETY VIABLE IS ACCOUNTABILITY, AND I THINK I SHOULD GIVE YOU A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE MECHANISM WHICH WE NOW HAVE FOR THIS PURPOSE IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH AND IN THE CONGRESS.

FIRST OF ALL, PLEASE BEAR IN MIND THAT I REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE PRESIDENT, AND, AS HIS CHIEF FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE ADVISER, I PRESENT TO HIM THE FINDINGS AND ESTIMATES OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY WITHOUT ANY FILTER OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS WHATEVER. I MAY ADD THAT I CONSIDER THIS ELEMENT OF MY FUNCTION AN ESSENTIAL SAFEGUARD OF THE INTEGRITY OF THE INTELLIGENCE PROCESS.

AS DCI I CHAIR THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE WHICH CONTROLS BUDGET PREPARATION AND RESOURCE APPLICATION FOR THE ENTIRE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM.

IN ADDITION, AN OPERATIONAL ADVISORY GROUP MAKES RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PRESIDENT CONCERNING SPECIAL

INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES -- THAT IS, COVERT ACTION, OF WHICH I WILL HAVE A FEW MORE WORDS TO SAY LATER. THE OAG ALSO REVIEWS AND APPROVES SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION OPERATIONS. THE MEMBERS OF THIS GROUP INCLUDE THE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS, THE SECRETARIES OF STATE AND DEFENSE, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, AND THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

IN RESPONSE TO THE INVESTIGATIONS OF U.S. INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY THE ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION AND BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEES, THE PRESIDENT ALSO HAS CREATED AN INTELLIGENCE OVERSIGHT BOARD OF THREE PROMINENT PRIVATE CITIZENS. THIS BOARD RECEIVES AND CONSIDERS REPORTS BY THE INSPECTORS GENERAL AND GENERAL COUNSELS OF THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY CONCERNING ANY ACTIVITIES THAT RAISE QUESTIONS OF LEGALITY OR PROPRIETY. INDIVIDUALS, WHETHER THEY BE FROM WITHIN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY OR NOT, CAN TAKE COMPLAINTS ~~OR CONVERSE~~ DIRECTLY TO THE IOB.

ON THE LEGISLATIVE SIDE, I REPORT TO SEVEN COMMITTEES OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, INCLUDING THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE WHICH HAS FULL OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY. AS A MATTER OF RECORD, AS DCI I HAVE APPEARED MORE THAN 40 TIMES IN FORMAL TESTIMONY BEFORE THESE COMMITTEES. THEY RECEIVE FROM ME A FULL AND DETAILED ACCOUNTING OF EVERY DOLLAR IN THE INTELLIGENCE BUDGET. ACCORDING TO EXISTING DIRECTIVES, APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES ARE ALSO BRIEFED IN A TIMELY MANNER ON COVERT ACTS AND PROGRAMS. I SUBMIT TO THE PRESIDENT.

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YOU WILL SEE FROM WHAT I HAVE JUST SAID THAT THE RISK OF THE CIA CONDUCTING COVERT ACTION WITHOUT DIRECTION AND APPROVAL FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF OUR GOVERNMENT IS SIMPLY NOT A REALISTIC FEAR. I AM CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE U.S. IN A WORLD IN WHICH WE FACE POWERFUL, DETERMINED, AND OFTEN UNSCRUPULOUS ADVERSARIES, DEMAND THAT WE RETAIN A CAPABILITY FOR COVERT ACTION.

IN ITS ESSENCE THIS CAPABILITY GIVES US THE OPTION OF PROTECTING VITAL INTERESTS AT TIMES AND PLACES WHERE DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATION IS NO LONGER FEASIBLE AND MILITARY ACTION UNJUSTIFIED.

ARE WE TO STAND BY AND WATCH FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS BE TOPPLED BY THE ACTIONS OF THOSE WHO ARE HOSTILE TO THE UNITED STATES AND TO OUR SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT? IF WE UNILATERALLY AND ARBITRARILY REJECT THE OPTION OF COVERT ACTION AS A LEGITIMATE MEANS OF DEFENDING OURSELVES AND OUR ALLIES, WE WOULD BE REDUCING OUR CHOICE OF MEANS IN SOME DANGEROUS SITUATIONS TO EITHER RELYING ON ANOTHER DIPLOMATIC DÉMARCHÉ OR TAKING UNDENIABLE ARMED ACTION. COVERT ACTION IS THUS A MIDDLE GROUND, AN ACTIVITY THAT CAN BE UNDERTAKEN QUIETLY AND INTELLIGENTLY TO MODIFY A SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

WHILE RETAINING THIS CAPACITY, WHICH IN MY VIEW SHOULD BE USED SPARINGLY, OUR EXISTING FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE MECHANISM MAKES SURE THAT SUCH AN ACTIVITY, IF NEEDED BY THE PRESIDENT, WOULD BE PRUDENTLY CONCEIVED, PROPERLY APPROVED AND EFFECTIVELY SUPERVISED.

I WILL CONCLUDE ON A PERSONAL NOTE. WHEN I CAME TO LANGLEY LAST JANUARY TO BE SWORN IN AS DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE, I WAS NO STRANGER TO THE INTELLIGENCE PRODUCT. IN PEKING AND AT THE UNITED NATIONS I HAD USED IT AND FOUND IT VERY GOOD. FOR THE LAST TEN MONTHS I HAVE WORKED DAY IN AND DAY OUT IN A CLOSE AND INTENSIVE FASHION WITH THE PROFESSIONALS OF THE UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY. I HAVE NEVER WORKED WITH A MORE DEDICATED, MORE PROFESSIONALLY COMPETENT, MORE LOYAL, AND MORE IMPRESSIVE GROUP OF PEOPLE. I SPEAK ON THEIR BEHALF AS WELL AS MY OWN WHEN I ASSURE YOU THAT WE HAVE DONE ALL IN OUR POWER TO MAKE AMERICAN FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SECOND TO NONE. WE ARE DETERMINED, WITH YOUR HELP, TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.

THANK YOU.

1/30
CIA or LA

1. Do you condone "meddling" in internal affairs of other countries?
 2. Are there legal sanctions vs. cloak, bank - what is GOS position?
 3. Concern of covert action
 4. KGB capability to mobilize public opinion around the world
 5. Extent of CIA help to Helms etc vs. Pro
 6. Does CIA commit defense? create defense?
 7. How will CIA change under Carter?
 8. Need to increase professionalism, reduce "timidity"
 9. Learn on
- Add
responsibility
- Tear of Gering's
introduction.